

**EUROGROUP
FOR ANIMALS**



MEMORANDUM ON ANIMAL WELFARE RELATED POLICIES

TO THE MALTESE PRESIDENCY
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EU



SUMMARY OF ANIMAL WELFARE PRIORITIES FOR THE MALTESE PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL FROM JANUARY TO JUNE 2017

Eurogroup for Animals, the leading pan-European animal advocacy organisation, would like to present the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the EU with its key concerns during their forthcoming Presidency. A number of developments are on the agenda that will have significant impact on the lives of billions of animals. We trust that the Presidency will use our input and positions as set out in this document to ensure that they work to accommodate and protect animals and their welfare.

In March this year, the first Eurobarometer on animal welfare in nine years conclusively demonstrated that an overwhelming majority of EU citizens want the Union's institutions to act to better protect animals. We call upon the Maltese Presidency to listen to the voice of citizens.

Furthermore, several Member States joined forces and have shown clear leadership on animal welfare. The Agricultural Ministers of Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark launched several Animal Welfare Declarations and position papers calling on the European Commission to tackle animal welfare issues in various areas. The Ministerial Alliance's call for a revision of the Transport Regulation was recently joined by Belgium, Luxembourg and Austria. We encourage the Maltese government to join the Ministerial Animal Welfare Alliance.

KEY TOPICS FOR THE MALTESE PRESIDENCY

EUROGROUP FOR ANIMALS VIEWS THE FOLLOWING PRIORITIES FOR THE MALTESE PRESIDENCY

Animal Welfare Strategy 2017-2021

Call on the EC to formulate a new animal welfare strategy 2017-2021 in line with the European Parliament motion for a resolution on a new animal welfare strategy for 2016-2020 (2015/2957(RSP)). The previous animal welfare strategy expired in 2015 and the European Commission (EC) will finish the overdue deliverables in 2017. Despite the clear calls of several Member States, and the overwhelming support from the European Parliament, no clarity has been given whether there will be a follow-up animal welfare strategy. In view of Article 13 in the TFEU as well as the multifactorial nature of animal welfare issues, it is perfectly justified and urgent for the EC to come forward with a new strategy.

EU Animal Welfare Platform

As a means for better coordination and preparation, the EC will present the terms of reference of the horizontal EU Animal Welfare Platform in the beginning of 2017. We call on the Maltese Presidency to ensure a sound governance structure of the platform which should aim at delivering clear results. In this light, urgent priority topics for the platform are: farm animal mutilations; trade in animals kept as companions; responsible ownership and care of equines; standards in dairy cattle; long distance live animal transport to slaughter; and method of production labelling. Moreover, the platform should have its own budget line which should be ring-fenced and transparent.

Antimicrobial Resistance

A roadmap is needed to reduce preventive antimicrobial use in livestock farming by 50% in 5 years (as part of their national plan to tackle antimicrobial resistance).

Piglet Mutilations

A roadmap is needed to phase out all piglet mutilations, including surgical piglet castration.

Transport of Live Farm Animals

Support the European Parliament call (Resolution 2012/2031 INI) for a socio-economic impact assessment on the costs related with long distance live animal transport (environmental impact, social and economic costs, animal health and welfare implications) and to host the closing event of the #StopTheTrucks campaign.

Exotic pet trade

We invite Malta to co-host alongside Eurogroup for Animals and the Intergroup for the Welfare and Conservation of Animals a conference to present the benefits of the adoption of the Positive List, as well as practical solutions on how to implement it.

Use of wild animals in circus

Promote and support the Parliamentary Resolution to prohibit the movement of wild animals in circuses

Equines

Facilitate the presentation of a Position Paper by the Ministerial Alliance (Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Belgium and the Netherlands) on equine welfare, for joint actions to be included within the scope of the Animal Welfare Platform.

Enforcement of Directive on the Protection of Animals Used for Scientific Purposes 2010/63/EU

There will be no improvement to animal welfare without proper and full implementation and enforcement of the Directive across all Member States.

We invite Malta, alongside Eurogroup for Animals and the National Committee of the Netherlands, to consider co-hosting an event to promote alternative approaches to animal use.

Trade Negotiations

The EU Council through the Maltese Presidency must use its ultimate power to initiate debate on re-thinking EU common commercial policy and the way EU trade agreements are negotiated. This process needs to ensure that EU animal welfare standards are compromised neither through regulatory provisions nor by granting access to sub-standard animal products to the EU market – both in current and planned FTA negotiations and ratifications.

OVERVIEW OF THE TOPICS

FARM ANIMALS

- Slaughter of farm animals
- Enforcement of the Pigs Directive (2008/120/EC)
- Surgical piglet castration
- Addressing antimicrobial resistance
- Improving transparency to consumers on higher animal welfare products
- Mid-term review of the Common Agricultural Policy
- Cloning of animals for food

WILDLIFE

- Use of wild animals in circuses
- Positive List for exotic pets
- EU Action Plan Against Wildlife Trafficking
- Evaluation of the Zoos Directive
- Invasive Alien Species

CATS & DOGS

- Guidelines on responsible ownership and care
- Event on population management
- Compatible systems for the identification and registration of pets

EQUINES

- Support for measures in EP Resolution on responsible ownership and care
- Support efforts from ministerial alliance to further equine welfare

ANIMALS IN RESEARCH, TESTING AND EDUCATION

- Enforcement of Directive on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes: 2010/63/EU
- Alternatives: Member States commitments

TRADE

- The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)
- EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)
- EU-Mercosur
- Negotiations to be launched (Turkey, Australia, and New Zealand)
- Implementation of existing agreements

FARM ANIMALS

SLAUGHTER

According to the existing Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009, animals shall only be killed after being stunned (Art.4.1). However, derogation to this rule is possible for “animals subject to particular methods of slaughter prescribed by religious rites” (Art 4.4). When animals are not rendered unconscious before the ritual cut they are exposed to pain, suffering, fear and distress and this is confirmed by much scientific evidence. The 2004 Report by the European Food Safety Authority states that there is a high risk that animals that have not been stunned feel extreme pain during the cutting of the throat, animals shall only be killed after being stunned. Eurogroup for Animals believes that all animals should be stunned before slaughter.



Eurogroup for Animals considers that the Maltese Presidency is in a good position to:

- Pursue a constructive dialogue with other Member States and exchanging information and best practices on how to facilitate acceptance of reversible stunning during ritual slaughter.

TRANSPORT OF LIVE ANIMALS

On 22 March 2016, Eurogroup for Animals launched the campaign #StopTheTrucks (www.stophetrucks.eu) aiming to end long distance live animal transport. The long term goals of the campaign are:

- Replacing the transport of live animals by that of semen and the transport of slaughter animals by that of carcasses and meat;
- Reducing the duration of transport of livestock (maximum of 8 hours for mammals and 4 hours for poultry);
- Refining the remaining live animals transport by stricter judgement of fitness for transport and improving the transport conditions.

To achieve these goals Eurogroup for Animals is engaging with governments to secure support for a revision of the current Regulation.

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- The Maltese Presidency to support the revision of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 and to urge the Commission to present a socio-economic impact assessment of the external costs relating to long distance transport of live animals (animal health and welfare impact, biosecurity risks, rural development effects, environmental impact).

ENFORCEMENT OF THE PIGS DIRECTIVE

The European Commission’s Recommendation and Staff Working Document clarifying the practical requirements to comply with the Pigs Directive were published in March 2016. These documents clearly explain to competent authorities and operators, which measures should be put in place depending on the production system, to comply with the ban on routine tail docking, whose main prerequisite is the provision of appropriate environmental enrichment to all animals. They also specify measurable outcomes that can be measured to verify compliance with the legislation. In the meantime, the scale of suffering caused by the European pig industry’s refusal to respect the law is enormous.

The EU rears approximately 250 million pigs a year. This means that 3 25 billion pigs were reared and killed since Directive 2008/120/EC came into force. Based on data collected by the European Food Safety Authority, the reports of official inspections carried out by the Food and Veterinary Office, and the outcomes of investigations carried out by Compassion in World Farming, at least 80% of those pigs (conservative estimate) have been routinely tail docked which has been banned since 1994, and have been reared without enrichment materials. Most EU Member States have failed to enforce legislation; so far the European Commission has refused to launch infringement procedures against non-compliant Member States, something that constitutes a quite extraordinary dereliction of the respective responsibilities.

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- The Maltese Presidency to pressurise the Commission so that the action plan currently in preparation on the part of the Directorate for Health and Consumer Protection (ex-FVO) is made public, closely monitored and includes timelines for infringement procedures.

SURGICAL PIGLET CASTRATION

Male pigs are routinely castrated without anaesthesia for two main reasons: to prevent the risk of boar taint, an unpleasant smell that can be detected when the meat is cooked; and to minimise sexual aggressive behaviour. Surgical castration is very painful for the piglets, and thus is an animal welfare concern. Additionally, this brutal practice is no longer justified as there are far less invasive animal welfare friendly alternatives, which have been successfully implemented in several countries.

To address these concerns in 2010 the European Commission, with the support of the Belgian presidency of the Council of the European Union, established the “European Declaration on Alternatives to Surgical Castration of Pigs”. The Declaration is a voluntary commitment signed by 33 stakeholders of the pork chain (farmers, veterinarians, meat industry, NGOs, governmental bodies, researchers, etc) to abandon surgical castration by 1 January 2018. In December 2015, the expert group in charge of ensuring the good progress of the Declaration prepared and approved a clear roadmap to reach the 2018 deadline. However, early in 2016 the European Commission withdrew its support of the Brussels Declaration to prioritise the outstanding strategic objectives of the Animal Welfare Strategy 2012-15.

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- The Maltese Presidency to urge the European Commission to facilitate the realisation of the action plan 2015-2018 prepared by the expert group with the support of DG SANTE, and to stimulate acceptance of alternatives to the surgical castration of pigs.

METHOD OF PRODUCTION LABELLING

The European Union has emphasised its intention to empower consumers to make informed choices in order that the market can drive further improvements in farm animal welfare. The best way to achieve this is through mandatory method of production labelling of all meat and dairy products, underpinned by animal-based welfare assessments.

Method of production labelling is a simple measure to increase transparency. Clear labelling benefits consumers, who are able to correctly identify products from farming systems associated with higher animal welfare. It increases producer confidence in the market for higher welfare meat and dairy products, incentivising new entrants, and stimulating further improvements and innovation. Method of production labelling works most effectively when products from standard intensive systems are also labelled. Major retailers have advised us that traceability is good, and that method of production labelling is straight-forward and cost-free for many animal-derived products, particularly chicken and pork products. Evidence also shows that where producers see a clear market advantage, such as through the use of point of sale labels, they will more readily engage with assurance schemes and on farm assessments. Method of production labels therefore aid compliance.

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- Method of production labelling to become a named topic area for the new Animal Welfare Platform.
- An economic impact assessment of method of production labelling of meat and dairy products.

ADDRESSING ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

The excessive and/or inappropriate use of antimicrobials in livestock is one of the driving factors in the development of resistance in bacteria, fungi and parasites. Prescription-only use in farmed animals, and strict national action plans for a generalized reduction in antimicrobial use will be required to contain antimicrobial resistance, which is currently expected to cause 350 million premature deaths in the next 35 years.

Better animal welfare can play a key role in this fight to tackle the growing antimicrobial resistance. High stocking densities, barren environments, poor hygiene, inadequate ventilation and lighting conditions, painful mutilations, early weaning, and selection for increasing productivity are major factors that contribute to making farmed animals more vulnerable to infections. In these conditions, mass antibiotic treatments are necessary. Livestock housing needs to be adapted to the species-specific needs of the animals, and animal management needs to be optimised. More hygiene, more space, the availability of environmental enrichment, and the possibility to express normal behaviours are important aspects of animal welfare that can also promote better health.

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- On the Maltese Presidency to show leadership in the fight against antimicrobial resistance by including the reduction of preventive antimicrobial use in livestock by 50% within a 5-year period as a main target of their national action plan. Besides improved herd health and biosecurity measures, several key animal welfare provisions should be incorporated in such a plan. Examples of these measures include, but are not limited to, lower stocking densities, choice of rustic and slower-growing breeds, later weaning, ban on routine mutilations, attentive group management, and provision of enrichment to reduce stress.

CLONING OF ANIMALS FOR FOOD

Cloning is a technique of artificial reproduction to create identical animals which is inefficient, with very low rates of success (10% in cattle, 6% in pigs). More noticeable, animals experience high welfare concerns and suffer numerous health problems which have been highlighted in numerous EFSA reports.

In December 2013, the European Commission published legislative proposals to regulate the cloning of animals for food, and the sale and import of products from animal clones and their offspring. The proposals call for a provisional ban on cloning, however it does not go far enough. The European Parliament subsequently adopted their position back in September 2015. The Council has as yet not taken up discussions and they need to stop delaying and take action now!

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- The Maltese presidency to initiate discussions at Council level to take up the cloning issue and to support the European Parliament's position calling for an immediate permanent EU ban on the cloning of animals for food production, on the sale and imports of food products from cloned animals and their descendants. Permanent EU ban on the cloning of animals for food production, on the sale and imports of food products from cloned animals and their descendants.

RABBITS

Rabbits are the second most farmed species in numbers in the EU with an estimated 326 million slaughtered for meat every year. In 2014, the EU has produced 250,000 tons of rabbit meat. Nearly all farmed rabbits for meat and fur are kept in intensive farming systems, mainly in cages where their natural behaviour is severely restricted. This has been highlighted also by an EFSA report in 2005 on the impact of the current housing and husbandry systems on the health and welfare of farmed domestic rabbits.

Most Member States lack specific legislation for the keeping, breeding and fattening of rabbits but it is imperative to phase out battery and barren wire cages in rabbit farming, and to make the transition to better rabbit farming practices such as park systems that provide for sufficient space per rabbit and where rabbits can be kept in groups. Farmers making this transition should be supported under the rural development programmes of the CAP.

The European Parliament is currently debating an own initiative report on minimum standards for the protection of farm rabbits, which has the purpose to call on the European Commission to present a legislative proposal aimed at closing existing loopholes that lead to serious animal welfare abuses in the keeping, breeding, husbandry, transportation and slaughtering of farm rabbits.

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- Eurogroup for Animals calls on the Maltese Presidency to support the introduction of specific EU legislation, laying down minimum standards for the protection of farmed rabbits, as promoted by the related EP own initiative report.

WILDLIFE

USE OF WILD ANIMALS IN CIRCUSES

Opinion polls carried out in several Member States have shown that there is increasing doubt about the ethics of using live animals, particularly of non-domesticated species, for public entertainment. For instance, a 2010 government consultation in United Kingdom found that 94% of the public supported a ban on wild animal acts in England and Wales; and the consultation in Scotland in 2014 produced 98% of support for a ban (as a consequence, the Scottish Government committed in September 2016 to ban the use of wild animals in circuses).



This is reflected in the national legislation of 18 Member States that have already adopted limitations on using wild animals in circuses on the ground of animal health, biodiversity, public security, ethics or animal welfare. In addition, several European towns have either banned all circus animal acts or wild animal acts.

However, circuses belonging to countries or municipalities that adopted restrictions can move to destinations where they are still allowed to perform.

Consequently, only a coordinated approach among Member States would guarantee the end of these outmoded entertainments, a coherent and effective solution to the physical and emotional suffering of wild animals in circuses, and to the related health and conservation risks.

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- The Maltese Presidency to actively promote and support the Parliamentary Resolution to prohibit the movement of wild animals in circuses within and between Member States.

EU ACTION PLAN AGAINST WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

Wildlife trafficking has become one of the world's most profitable transnational criminal activities. Recent reports indicate a global surge in poaching and illegal wildlife trade, which is now at unprecedented levels for some species, and poses a serious threat to biodiversity and sustainable development. The EU has an important role to play in tackling this traffic, as Europe is currently a destination market and a hub for trafficking in transit to other regions.

This is why on 26 February 2016, the European Commission adopted a Communication on the EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking 2020 (COM(2016)87 final), endorsed by the Council in June 2016, which sets out a comprehensive blueprint for joined-up efforts to fight wildlife crime inside the EU, and for strengthening the EU's role in the global fight against these illegal activities. The plan has three main strands – greater enforcement, better cooperation, and more effective prevention. The Action Plan will finally allow the EU to dedicate sufficient resources and political attention on an issue which affects many of the core principles of its external policy, as biodiversity conservation, sustainable development, peace and security. In October 2016, the EP Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted an Initiative Report, to support the delivering and enforcing of the EU Action Plan.

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- The Maltese Presidency to promote the enforcement of the EU Action Plan Against Wildlife Trafficking by the Member States, through the allocation of appropriate financial and human resources.
- The Action Plan to be supported as soon as possible by appropriate legislative provisions relating to wildlife trafficking during the upcoming review of the current EU legislative framework for tackling environmental crime, and that the EC and MS involve civil society organisations in identifying strategies for the enforcement of existing rules.
- The Maltese Presidency to promote the adoption of EU-wide legislation to regulate the trade of exotic pets, as a necessary measure to facilitate the reduction of the demand for and supply of illegal wildlife products (objective 1.1 of the Action Plan). Positive lists of allowed species that are not traded in violation of foreign law, and/or that could not have a negative impact on the environment, on public health or on the health of other animals. As has been shown in Belgium and the Netherlands the positive list provides clarity to owners and enforcement agencies, creates less regulatory bureaucracy for governments and are preventive models at their core. Consequently, we call the Maltese presidency to promote the adoption of positive list as the best way to regulate the keeping and trade of exotic pets even at European Union level.

EVALUATION OF THE ZOOS DIRECTIVE

The EU Zoos Directive (Council Directive 1999/22/EC) aims to ensure that zoos in Member States serve to promote the conservation of biodiversity through species protection and conservation, whilst also fulfilling their role in public education, and/or scientific research. However, there is overwhelming evidence that there are serious inconsistencies in, and sometimes a complete absence of, the implementation and enforcement of the requirements of the EU Zoo Directive across all EU Member States.

In July 2015, the Commission published the EU Zoo Directive Good Practices Document to help Member States to ensure that zoos provide adequate accommodation, enrichment and husbandry for the animals, appropriate veterinary and nutritional care, prevent the escape of animals contribute to research and educate the public on biodiversity. In August 2016, the European Commission started a comprehensive evaluation of the Zoo Directive, as part of its Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT) initiative.

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- the Maltese Presidency to contribute towards the dissemination and sharing - possibly through workshops and conferences - of the EU Zoos Good Practices Document amongst all Member States, to ensure their prompt uptake.
- the Maltese Presidency to support a constructive dialogue and engagement of the European Commission, Member States and stakeholders in the process of the evaluation (REFIT) of the Zoos Directive, to support the improvement and better enforcement of the Zoos Directive as an expected result of the EC REFIT process

EXOTIC PETS

Exotic animals are unsuited to a life in captivity, which may result in severe animal welfare problems, can be detrimental to biodiversity and have a negative impact on animal and human health. A Positive list of allowed exotic pets has already been adopted in Belgium and the Netherlands. Additionally, the positive List approach has already received support from the European Court of Justice.

wEurogroup for Animals calls for:

- The Maltese Presidency to promote the adoption of a Positive List of allowed exotic pets as the most effective and efficient measure to address concerns related to animal welfare, animal and human health, biodiversity conservation and invasiveness of alien species in Europe.
- The Maltese Presidency to co-host a conference, in conjunction with Eurogroup for Animals and the Intergroup on Animal Welfare, to present the benefits of the adoption of the Positive List, as well as practical solutions on how to implement it.

INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

Invasive Alien Species (IAS) are animals and plants that are introduced accidentally or deliberately into a natural environment where they are not normally found, with serious negative consequences for their new environment. The EU Regulation 1143/2014 on invasive alien species entered into force on 1 January 2015. This Regulation seeks to address the problem of invasive alien species so as to protect native biodiversity and ecosystem services, as well as to minimise and mitigate the human health or economic impacts that these species can have. However, the introduction of IAS continues to increase in Europe with the pet and fur trade identified as a key pathway.

According to the EU Regulation, by 4 February 2018, Member States shall have in place effective management measures for those invasive alien species of Union concern which they have found to be widely spread on their territory. The EU Regulation includes clear provisions stating that when applying management measures and selecting methods to be used, Member States shall ensure that animals are spared any avoidable pain, distress or suffering, and that these may consist of non-lethal methods. However, at the moment there is no clear guidance on the best available practices to ensure that these provisions are respected.

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- Support and encourage initiatives of Member States to include exotic pets and fur species in the List of species of Union Concern.
- The Maltese Presidency to urge the European Commission to identify and develop, in consultation with the civil society, guidelines/best practices on IAS management methods which will guarantee that humane and non-lethal methods are implemented.
- The Maltese Presidency to promote an integrated approach of the IAS regulation with the Positive List system as preventive best practice to avoid the introduction of new IAS in the European Union.



EQUINES

Despite the many differences between the roles and perceptions of equines across the Union, the welfare problems that they face are often remarkably similar. Keeping in unsuitable environments, is as likely to affect a horse in Bulgaria as a donkey in Germany. Concerns on neglect are just as likely to be raised in the United Kingdom as in Cyprus. It is clear that no Member State is entirely free of welfare issues, and yet many of these challenges stem from ignorance and a lack of knowledge.

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- The Maltese presidency to support a forthcoming Position Paper from Germany, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands and Belgium, supporting a forthcoming Resolution of the European Parliament, and which will propose a range of non-legislative measures, designed to spread best practices on the responsible ownership and care of equines. These involve:
- The dissemination of basic guidance for the care and ownership of an equid, from birth to end of life, based on the Five Freedoms;
- The use of innovative funding mechanisms to reward responsible on-farm ownership of equines, especially with regards to Small and Subsistence Farms (SSFs); and
- Empowering consumers/tourists, enabling them to reward those businesses that use equines in a responsible way

CATS & DOGS

Although ostensibly cat and dog welfare is a matter for the Member States, regions and even local authorities, there have been growing calls for remedial action at European level to address the large scale illegal trade in cats and dogs, and which exploits the use of the non-commercial pet passport scheme for wholly commercial purposes.

For instance, there has been an increasing recognition that an element of behaviour change is needed by those who buy and supply cats and dogs across the Union, and who too often perpetuate the illegal trade. This was notably recognised by the Commission's study on the welfare of dogs and cats involved in commercial practices, which also noted the key link to consumer protection. Many Member States have guidance and information in place, although there is a clear difference in the levels and availability of such guidance, depending on which Member State a citizen lives in. It should also be noted as to how ignorance around the needs of the animals is one of the main reasons for a growth in stray and feral populations, as too often, unwanted dogs and cats are simply abandoned.

Furthermore, stray dog populations and feral cats are of great concern to citizens, particularly when they have been subject to ineffective and inhumane control programmes. Whilst the European Commission has so far claimed that those national control programmes that have adversely impacted on dog and cat welfare are outside of their competences, and that they have no role to play with regards to the welfare of these animals per se, we disagree. The Union's institutions have a clear role to play when it comes to safeguarding animal and public health from transmissible diseases and many of the inhumane culls we have witnessed across Europe have been undertaken on this premise.



Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- The Maltese Presidency to promote the inclusion of a work programme on dog and cat welfare within the scope of the Animal Welfare Platform, focusing on the sharing of best practice with regards to information on the responsible ownership and care of these animals and the dissemination of simple guidance Union-wide to consumers, with a view to levelling the playing field and tackling ignorance.
- Support for those voices within the Council who wish to openly support measures on the identification and registration of pet animals, as contained within the European Parliament's Resolution of the 25 February 2016.
- The Maltese Presidency to co-host a conference, in conjunction with Eurogroup for Animals and the Intergroup on Animal Welfare, to explore ways of effectively and humanely controlling dog and cat populations within the EU.

ANIMALS IN RESEARCH, TESTING AND EDUCATION

ENFORCEMENT OF DIRECTIVE ON THE PROTECTION OF ANIMALS USED FOR SCIENTIFIC PURPOSES: 2010/63/EU

Since January 2013, Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes has applied since transposition into Member State national legislation. There will be no improvement to animal welfare without proper and full implementation and enforcement of the Directive across all Member States. According to the statistical data submitted by the State Veterinary and Food Administration of the Slovak Republic to the European Commission for the Statistical report published in 2013, only 10 animals were used for scientific purposes in 2011 in Malta. This is outstanding and Malta should therefore be seen as a standout country in decreasing the use of animals.



Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- The Maltese Presidency to contribute towards the dissemination of information and sharing of best practices amongst all Member States to ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of the Directive by urging Council and Commission to continuously improve the level of sharing of best practices in the EU.
- Active promotion and dissemination of the guidance developed at EU level. Malta would benefit from translating the guidance so it could be taken up fully by the user community, veterinarians and inspectors.
- Support a constructive dialogue and engagement of Commission, Member States and stakeholders in the process of the foreseen review of the Directive, Article 58, possibly through workshops and conferences

It is important that Malta plays their role in Directive 2010/63/EU to be implemented and enforced to its fullest such that it promotes improved animal welfare, faster and increased development and uptake of 3Rs, and improved quality of science.

ALTERNATIVES: MEMBER STATES COMMITMENTS

Article 47 of Directive 2010/63/EU, States that the Member States shall contribute to the development and validation of alternative approaches. It is essential that work on this issue continues and for Malta to have the opportunity to stand out on the issue during their presidency.

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- Active contribution to the promotion, funding, development and uptake of alternative approaches, as required in Article 47, so as to replace, where possible, animal testing with alternative approaches. We invite the presidency to promote alternatives in a joint conference organised at an EU level with Eurogroup for Animals and the Netherlands National Committee to promote a comprehensive EU strategy to evidently decrease animal use for research, testing and education.

THE TRANSATLANTIC TRADE AND INVESTMENT (TTIP)

The first half of 2017 will be a crucial period for the TTIP, whether the negotiations reach its final phase or be conducted mostly on a technical level. The EU will need to ensure that time pressure does not overcome the substance of the deal. TTIP, if and when concluded, is set to create the largest free trade area in the world. Further, it has a potential to set or inspire global standards and regulations. Therefore, careful consideration and guidance from the Council is necessary. Reduction or elimination of tariffs and non-tariff measures in animal products needs to be primarily guided by ensuring the quality of products and upholding the values and principles that citizens hold and that are embedded in the EU acquis and standards, including those related to animal welfare.



THE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC AND TRADE AGREEMENT (CETA)

The Maltese Presidency will see the process of CETA taken forward. After being initialled in 2014, it has been reopened to include a more modern version of the investor protection segment. Animal welfare is grossly omitted in this agreement and the welfare of EU farm animals is therefore threatened. The agreement should be reopened to include stronger provisions on farm animal welfare and conditional liberalisation on animal product market access.

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- Inclusion of effective measures that preserve in practice the ability of the EU to retain its existing animal welfare legislation and to introduce new legislation in this field.
- Carefully worded conditional liberalisation of farm animal products and sustaining legitimate non-tariff measures.
- Strong enforcement and adoption of US and Canadian best practices on wildlife provisions and more work on research animals in the TTIP negotiations to safeguard animal welfare

EU-JAPAN, EU-MERCOSUR

Mercosur countries are highly competitive in animal products. However, their advantage stems partially from their weak or non-existent animal welfare laws and regulations. Generous market access offers by the EU without any conditionality may disrupt the level playing field, threaten existing animal welfare standards and block future improvements.

EU-Japan negotiations are a unique process with European agriculture being on the offensive. While the potential of the trade opening may be of value to European producers, this should not be done on the expense of decreased animal welfare through intensification of farming. Additionally, EU should use this opportunity to deliver comprehensive animal welfare provisions to reflect economic, moral and environmental dimensions of animal welfare together with animal health aspects. Japan's detrimental whaling and fishing practices should also be addressed in these negotiations.

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- Negotiating towards animal welfare provisions encompassing multiple dimensions of animal welfare.
- Ensuring upholding animal welfare standards on both imports and exports.
- Exert pressure on Japan to cease activities detrimental to preservation of marine wildlife and welfare of certain species, especially whales.
- Market access offers that reflect different levels of animal welfare protection and proper consideration of conditional liberalisation.

NEGOTIATIONS TO BE LAUNCHED (TURKEY, AUSTRALIA, AND NEW ZEALAND)

The period of the Maltese Presidency will see the initial phases of several planned negotiating processes. From the animal welfare perspective, Turkey, Australia and New Zealand are of utmost importance. The Council's guidance with regard to these negotiations should include strong language on animal welfare.

Turkey's level of protection and practices are to be considered when newly negotiating an agricultural chapter. Moreover, these negotiations should ensure ways and means to cease EU exports of live animals to Turkey and to Middle East.

Australia and New Zealand, both members of The Cairns Group of main exporters of agricultural products, enacted useful animal welfare laws in some areas. Therefore, both bilateral negotiations present an opportunity to set up strong partnerships reflecting the intrinsic linkages between handling of animals and international trade in animals and animal products.

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- Proper evaluation and consideration of animal welfare in agricultural negotiations with Turkey.
- Creating ways and means for transports of live animals to be ceased.
- Building partnerships on animal welfare with Australia and New Zealand.

IMPLEMENTATION OF EXISTING AGREEMENTS

Next to negotiating and launching new processes, proper implementation of existing free trade agreements is insufficient and/or has a backlog in enforcement or institutional set-up.

Eurogroup for Animals calls for:

- Review of existing FTAs, evaluation of their implementation and cumulative effects on animal welfare.
- The Council to ensure that EU-Vietnam FTA and its provision on technical assistance on animal welfare is properly implemented.
- Lessons are learned from existing agreements with regards to enforcement mechanisms of trade and sustainable development chapters.
- The Council's Trade Policy Committee to conduct a discussion on the linkages between international trade and animal welfare.



EUROGROUP FOR ANIMALS STRONGLY BELIEVES THAT BETTER EUROPEAN LEGISLATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF ANIMAL RELATED LEGISLATION IS A PRE-CONDITION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE.

WE ARE COMMITTED TO WORKING WITH ALL EUROPEAN DECISION-MAKERS TO MAKE THIS A REALITY. WE LOOK FORWARD TO DISCUSSING OUR PROPOSALS WITH THE PRESIDENCY AND HOPE THAT TOGETHER WE CAN BUILD A EUROPE THAT CARES FOR ANIMALS.

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